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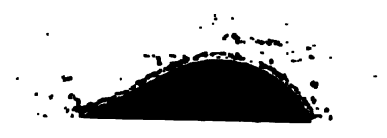
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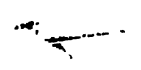
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1896

EXPLANATION  
OF THE  
CUTTER AUTHOR-MARKS

BY CHARLES A. CUTTER

SECOND EDITION  
ADAPTED TO THE THREE-FIGURE TABLES

1896

11111111



# THE CUTTER AUTHOR-MARKS;

## WHY AND HOW THEY ARE USED.\*

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It has been found convenient by librarians to arrange some classes of books alfabetically. In Biografy, for instance, if the books stand on the shelves in the order of the names of the persons whose lives they treat of, one knows that Adams will be at the beginning of the class and Washington at the end and Jefferson somewhere near the middle; and one can go to the shelf, and get the life one wants, without having to consult a catalog first, which makes a saving, not only of time, but of eyes and patience. Moreover, one will find *all* the lives of Washington standing side by side, which will often not happen on any other plan. In Fiction such an arrangement, either by authors' names or by titles, is almost a necessity. In Poetry and the Drama also it is useful; and, in fact, in every class it is better than an arrangement by sizes, which merely makes the shelves look a little more orderly, or by accession-number, which has no advantage at all.

But it is also found that the books must have some marks on the back to keep them in order. The binders' titles will not do, because they often do not contain the word by which the book should be arranged; and when they do, the arranger cannot always see at a glance which of several words is the one to arrange by. Moreover, we want some brief mark peculiar to each book, and not belonging to any other copy, by which to charge the volume to the borrower. Therefore I letter on the lower part of the back of each book:

1. In one line, the letters or figures that denote its CLASS and sub-class.

2. In another line, the initial of the author's name, followed by certain figures (to be explained later on); this line stands for the AUTHOR'S NAME.

3. In another line, the initial of the TITLE (used only when there are two works by the same author in the same sub-class).

4. In the same line, when there is more than one COPY of the same work, I put 2 for the second copy, 3 for the third, if there is one, and so on.

\* Some preliminary discussions on this subject may be found in "Plans for numbering with especial reference to fiction, a library symposium," *Library Journal*, 4: 38-47.





*Example in English Fiction.*



YF  
.D314.

Defoe's  
Novels.

Class,  
author  
and title.

YF  
.D314.

r  
Defoe's  
Robinson  
Crusoe.

Class,  
author,  
title  
and copy.

YF  
.D314.

r4  
Robinson  
Crusoe,  
4th copy.

**ALPHABETIC ORDER.**

Books on the shelves are kept alphabeted by authors by marking them with the initial of the author's family name \* followed by one or more decimal figures assigned according to a table so constructed that the names whose initials are followed by some of the *first* letters of the alphabet have the *first* numbers, and those in which the initials are followed by *later* letters have *later* numbers.†

|                        |               |
|------------------------|---------------|
| E. g., Garfield, G231. | Gore, G666.   |
| Gerry, G371.           | Grand, G751.  |
| Gilman, G487.          | Grote, G881.  |
| Glover, G565.          | Guizot, G969. |

If the books are arranged in the order of these numbers, of course they will be in alphabetical order.

*To use the table :*

1. Find the first few letters of the author's name in the table; the figures following added to the initial are the mark.

E. g., for the name Holmes the old table gives Holm 73, the mark is H73. Lowell (Low 95) has L95, Tenney (Ten 25), T25. Huxley is H98, Macaulay is M11, Thackeray, T32.

\*In the case of authorless books (anonymous works, periodicals, government publications, etc.), the alphabetical order is determined by the heading adopted for cataloging, according to Cutter's rules for a dictionary catalog. British noblemen (except Lord Bacon) should be arranged by their titles. Noted pseudonyms (as Geo. Eliot, Mark Twain) should be used instead of the real names. In biography, when the Decimal Classification is used, the name of the subject of the life should be used instead of the name of the author; in the Expansive Classification, the name of the subject forms part of the class-mark, as Gerry's Life, E6 31.

† Two sets of tables have been issued: the first with only 2 figures after the initial; the second, prepared by Miss Kate E. Sanborn, with 3 figures. The two cannot be used together in the same class, because the two figures of the Cutter tables are not the same as the first two figures of the Cutter-Sanborn. In libraries where the old tables are used for small classes, the new can be used for the large classes, like Biography and Fiction, by a rearrangement. New libraries, or libraries using the order tables for the first time, are advised to get the three-figure tables, and use only the first or the first two figures in the smaller classes.

The figures given in the following examples are from the Cutter-Sanborn tables, excepting where the old table is expressly mentioned.

In printing a catalog, the printer should be cautioned not to use the old style figures (1, 2, 3, 4, etc.), in which the figure 1 is the same as the "small capital" letter i.

2. For names beginning with A, E, I, O, U, and S, I prefer to use the first two letters of the author's name instead of the initial, and for names beginning with Sc three-letters.

In my original tables this was provided for, but only one figure was used, the second letter taking the place of a figure. For large classes, a second figure is needed, and I am preparing such a table for use at the Forbes Library. Some persons, however, object to the use of two letters. For such Miss Sanborn has prepared a table of the vowels and S with three figures. In the old table, Abbot is AB2, Edwards, ED9, Ives, IV3, Olney, OL6, Upton, UP1, Semmes, SE5, Scammon, SCA5, Schopenhauer, SCH6.

In this way fewer marks are used for the same amount of distinction.

3. If the first letters of the name do not occur in the table take the letters next previous in the alphabetical order.

E. g., there is no Dot in the old table; for Dotten, therefore, we take the number of Dos, which gives D74; for Pecksniff, the number of Peb; for Manners, the number of Mam. In the new table there is not Fap; for Fappen, therefore, we take the number of Fantu, which gives F218.

4. If the number found is already in use, annex another decimal.

E. g., if one using the old table wishes to insert Harrison between Harris, H24, and Harsnet, H25, a third figure makes Harrison H242, Harrisse H245, Harry H249. If, again, there is a Harrison, Alfred, H242, Harrison, James, may be numbered with a fourth figure, H2424, Harrison, John, H2425, Harrison, Robert, H2427, and so on. This can be carried to any extent.

In making such insertions it is necessary to consider in what part of the gap the new name will best go, so as to leave room on one side or the other for future insertions. For instance, between Bal 18 and Bald 19 there may come in all the names beginning with Bala, Balb, Balc. There are nine numbers, which we might divide thus: Bala 1-3, Balb 4-6, Balc 7-9. Then Balbi would be B184, and Balbo B185, Balbuena, B186, Balcarres, B187, Balch, B188. If Balboa should come in, it would go between B185 and B186, i. e., B1853. I do not make it B1851, wishing to leave room for another Balbo. Except in very large classes, like Fiction or Biography, one rarely gets to the fourth figure. But bad judgment in choosing the third figure may hasten the need of adding a fourth.

Avoid using the number 1 as long as other numbers are vacant, because when it is once used nothing can be inserted before it; one cannot put, for instance, anything between 22 and 221. Zero is not used because it might be mistaken for the letter o of a work-mark; otherwise, 220 would come between 22 and 221.



5. The figures are to be considered as decimals, and arranged on the shelf in the order H2, H21, H211, H2111, H2112, H22, H23, H233, H24, H3, and so on.

That is, all the numbers beginning with 2 come before a number beginning with 3, and all the numbers beginning with 21 before any beginning with 22, and all beginning with 221 before any beginning with 222; just as in a dictionary all the words beginning with *ab* come before words beginning with *ac*, and all the *aca* words come before the *acb* words.

☞ Some persons are apprehensive that this decimal arrangement will be hard to use, or at least hard to teach to stupid assistants and (when the public are allowed to go to the shelves) to a public unwilling to take the trouble to comprehend. It may be so sometimes; I can only say that I have never had any difficulty with anyone, boy or girl, man or woman, when the arrangement was explained as it is above. But if this is considered a serious objection to the use of these author-marks, the difficulty can be entirely avoided by using two figures with the initial in all cases, treating them as ordinals, and when two names are to be represented by the same combination, so that subdivision becomes necessary, starting a new series of ordinals either from 1 to 9 or from 11 to 99, by putting a point after the first two figures, e. g., H21.1, or H21.11. The stupidest attendant could not fail to comprehend the order H34, H34.1, H34.2, H34.3, H34.4, and so on. As it would be awkward to use two decimal points (H34.2.1, H34.2.2), it would be well to use two figures after the decimal point in very large collections, as Fiction and Biography, thus, H34, H34.11, H34.12, H34.13, etc.

Of course this method does not allow infinite intercalation. A time will come when some new name cannot be inserted in its proper order, because its number is already occupied. But a notation consisting of an initial followed by four characters provides places for so many names that this misfortune will not occur soon or frequently. And when it does occur the approximate alphabetical arrangement that will here and there result is very much better than no alphabetic order at all.

(5)



